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TAGS: PREL, GC, GZ, US
SUBJECT: SEVERAL HUNDRED EAST GERMANS GATHER FOR
- PRESIDENT'S SPEECH
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1. SUMMARY. WHILE LARGE NUMBERS OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN WERE UNDOUBTEDLY WATCHING WEST GERMAN TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT THE BRANDENBURG GATE JUNE 12, SEVERAL HUNDRED EAST GERMANS GATHERED NEAR THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE GATE TO SEE WHAT THEY COULD OVER THE WALL. BOTH THE CROWD AND THE POLICEMEN WHO TRIED -- MOSTLY IN VAIN -- TO GET THEM TO DISPERSE WERE PEACEFUL AND AVOIDED
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CONFRONTATIONS. END SUMMARY.
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2. NUMEROUS UNIFORMED POLICE AND SECURITY TYPES IN CIVILIAN DRESS STROLLED ALONG UNTER DEN LINDEN JUNE 12

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM J GEHRON
DATE/CASE ID: 22 DEC 2004 200403871
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AS EAST GERMANS OF ALL AGES DRIFTED TOWARD PARISER PLATZ, WHICH CONNECTS THE BOULEVARD AND THE BRANDENBURG GATE, IN THE HOUR BEFORE THE PRESIDENT'S APPEARANCE IN WEST BERLIN. AT THE WESTERN END OF THE BOULEVARD THEY FOUND THAT THE PORTION OF PARISER PLATZ ORDINARILY OPEN TO TOURISTS HAD BEEN SEALED OFF; THEREFORE, THEY CONGREGATED ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE INTERSECTION OF UNTER DEN LINDEN AND OTTO-GROTEWOHL-STRASSE (THE FORMER WILHELM-STRASSE) AND WAITED, LISTENING ACROSS THE WALL TO THE MUSIC WHICH PRECEDED THE PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL.

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3. ADDITIONAL UNIFORMED VOLKSPOLIZEI ARRIVED SHORTLY BEFORE 2:00 P.M., AND AT 1:58 A LOUDSPEAKER TWICE BROADCAST, "YOU ARE ASKED (AUFGEFORDERT) TO CONTINUE ON YOUR WAY; DO NOT REMAIN STANDING." WHILE A FEW PEOPLE LEFT THE AREA, THE VAST MAJORITY, RANGING FROM SMALL CHILDREN WITH THEIR PARENTS TO PERSONS MIDDLE-AGED AND OLDER, REMAINED. POLICEMEN THEN ENTERED THE CROWD TO PERSUADE INDIVIDUALS TO LEAVE, AND ONE YOUNG WOMAN WAS LED AWAY DOWN OTTO-GROTEWOHL-STRASSE. EMBOFF LISTENED IN ON A NUMBER OF EXCHANGES WITH THE VOLKSPOLIZEI IN WHICH, AFTER INDIVIDUALS STATED THAT THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THEY MUST GO, THE POLICE SIMPLY LET THEM STAY. A POLICEMAN TOLD A MAN TO WRITE THE VOLKSKAMMER IF HE DID NOT LIKE THE RULES BUT THEN MADE NO FURTHER EFFORT TO MOVE HIM ALONG. ONE FELLOW ARGUED THAT HE PAID HIS TAXES AND COULD STAND WHERE HE LIKED; THE POLICE DID NOT OBJECT. HOWEVER, THE PAPERS OF A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE CROWD WERE EXAMINED.
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4. POLICE AND PUBLIC THEN SETTLED DOWN FOR A VERY QUIET HOUR. THE TOPS OF FLAGS WAVED BY THE CROWD LISTENING TO THE PRESIDENT OCCASIONALLY APPEARED OVER THE WALL THROUGH THE ARCHES OF THE BRANDENBURG GATE. OTHERWISE, NOTHING COULD BE SEEN OR HEARD. PARENTS LIFTED SMALL CHILDREN ONTO THEIR SHOULDERS TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE WAVING FLAGS, AND ADULTS LOOKED INTENTLY THROUGH BINOCULARS TOWARD THE WEST. TWICE MORE A VOICE CAME OVER THE LOUDSPEAKER TELLING PEOPLE TO DISPERSE, BUT THEY JUST KEPT STANDING, CONVERSING QUIETLY AND LOOKING TOWARD THE WALL. NUMEROUS TOUR BUSES, PLYING THEIR USUAL ROUTE, PASSED SLOWLY BETWEEN THE CROWD AND THE GATE, THEIR PASSENGERS STARING AT THE STRANGE ASSEMBLY. AROUND 3:00 PEOPLE BEGAN DRIFTING AWAY. THOSE REMAINING A QUARTER HOUR

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LATER WERE OUTNUMBERED BY SECURITY PERSONNEL.

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5. IN SUM, THE SEVERAL HUNDRED EAST GERMANS WHO GATHERED NEAR THE BRANDENBURG GATE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH WERE WELL BEHAVED. THEY SEEMED TO BE MAINLY CURIOSITY SEEKERS, CURIOUS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT AND ABOUT THE CLASHES BETWEEN POLICE AND ROCK MUSIC FANS WHICH OCCURRED LAST WEEKEND AT THE SAME SITE. WHILE THEY REFUSED TO DISPERSE, THEY DID NOT APPEAR TO BE INTERESTED IN CONFRONTATION. FOR THEIR PART, THE SECURITY FORCES, BOTH IN AND OUT OF UNIFORM, WERE RESERVED DESPITE, OR PERHAPS BECAUSE OF, THEIR LARGE NUMBERS. MEEHAN

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